CLAIM AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application or previous response to office action:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for order entry and processing in the manufacturing of a photomask component, comprising:

electronically receiving product order information for the photomask component;

automatically translating the product order information into a product **order** information file having a standard database format;

automatically processing the product order information file using a rules engine to apply a predefined set of customer requirements to the product order information file such that the product order information file is loaded into an order entry module;

using the order entry module to automatically create a production data file for the production of the photomask component according to the product order information file;

automatically selecting a template including customer specifications based on at least one criteria related to the manufacture of the photomask component; and

validating the product order information file by automatically comparing the product order information file to the template to identify any inconsistencies.

2. (Cancelled)

3. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising based on the validation of the product order information file, notifying an operator of **any** identified ~~**inconsisteney**~~ **inconsistencies**.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 3, wherein the notification comprises an email notification.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising following an identification of at least one inconsistency, manually selecting a template for the product order information file.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the at least one criteria is selected from the group consisting of customer, fabrication, product type, template grade and template region.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the product order information is in a semi-file based format.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the product order information is in a non-semi-file based format.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the standard database format comprises a standard semi database format.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 9, wherein the standard database format further comprises a customer specification information not included in the standard semi database format.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising translating the product order information into a standard file format.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 11, further comprising configuring the product order information in extensible markup language (XML) format according to an XML configuration.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein the XML configuration includes specification information.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the production data file for the production of a photomask component includes lithography instructions and patterning information.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein creating the production data file for the production of the photomask component further comprises using the product order information file to select a customer-specified order template for use in preparing the production data file for the production of the photomask component.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising translating the product order information into a standard database format in less than approximately one minute.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising preparing the production data file for production of the photomask component in less than approximately one hour.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising maintaining data necessary for production of the photomask component in the standard database format usable by a plurality of manufacturing sites.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the method having an order entry process with an error rate of less than 0.5 percent.

20. **(Currently Amended)** A system for electronic order entry and automatic processing of a photomask component order comprising:

a computer-readable medium; and

executable instructions encoded in the computer-readable medium, the executable instructions, operable to direct a computer to:

electronically receive product order information;

automatically translate the product order information into a product **order** information file having a standard database format;

automatically process the product order information file using a rules engine to apply a predefined set of customer requirements to the product order information file such that the product order information file is loaded into an order entry module;

automatically create a production data file for the production of the photomask component according to the product order information file;

select a template including customer specifications based on at least one criteria related to the manufacture of the photomask component; and

validate the product order information file by automatically comparing the product order information file to the template to identify at least one inconsistency.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 20, further comprising the executable instructions further operable to notify an operator whether any inconsistencies were identified during the validation operation.

23. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 22, further comprising the executable instructions further operable to facilitate the manual selection of a template for a product order information file following the identification of at least one inconsistency between the product order information file and the selected template.

24. **(Currently Amended)** A method of manufacturing a photomask component, comprising:

electronically receiving a product order information file;

automatically translating the product order information file into an XML file;

automatically processing the XML file using a rules engine to apply a predefined set of customer requirements to the XML file such that the product order information **file** is loaded into an order entry module;

automatically selecting a template including customer specifications based on at least one criteria related to the manufacture of the photomask component indicated in the product order information file;

validating the product order information by automatically comparing the product order information **file** to the template to identify any inconsistencies; and

using the order entry module to automatically create a production data file for directing the production of a photomask component according to the product order information **file**.

25. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 24, further comprising electronically notifying an operator whether any inconsistencies were identified during the validation of the product order information **file**.

26. (Original) The method of Claim 25, wherein electronically notifying comprises generating an e-mail notification.

27. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 24, further comprising manually selecting a template for **[[a]] the** product order information **file** following an identification of at least one inconsistency.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 24, wherein the production data file includes lithography instructions and patterning information.